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The situation in Afghanistan

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The situation in Afghanistan and its implication for international peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 66/13 and Security Council resolution 1974 (2011), in which the Council requested me to report on developments in Afghanistan every three months.

2. The report provides an update on the activities of the United Nations in Afghanistan, including significant humanitarian, development and human rights efforts, since my previous report issued on 13 December 2011 (A/66/604-S/2011/772). It also provides a summary of key political and security developments and regional and international events related to Afghanistan. Section IV of the report (Observations) addresses the comprehensive review of the mandated activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and United Nations support in Afghanistan requested by the Security Council in its resolution 1974 (2011). The annex contains an assessment of progress towards benchmarks and indicators since my report of 9 March 2011 (A/65/783-S/2011/120), in line with Security Council resolution 1868 (2009).

II. Relevant developments

A. Political developments

3. Throughout the period following the Bonn Conference of 5 December 2011, the political debate in Afghanistan was dominated by how best to approach a potential peace process. Discussion both inside and outside Afghanistan focused increasingly on ways to reinvigorate efforts that had previously been fragmented or stalled. More specifically, the discourse was dominated by the possible

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establishment of a Taliban office to facilitate dialogue and its location, potentially in Qatar.

4. On 15 December, it was agreed at a meeting between President Karzai and prominent national figures that a practical mechanism to engage the armed opposition was required; it was also emphasized that any peace process must be led and owned by the Afghans. They backed proposals to establish a Taliban office, but indicated a preference that it be located in Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia or Turkey. On 20 December 2011, the Government of Afghanistan circulated to diplomatic missions an 11-point statement setting out its conditions for such interaction and emphasizing that the gains of the past 10 years must not be lost.

5. On 3 January 2012, it was announced in a written statement attributable to the Taliban that the group was prepared to establish a political office in order to "come to an understanding with other nations"; the statement also noted an "initial agreement with Qatar and other related sides". In an address to both houses of the National Assembly on 21 January, President Karzai called for Afghans fighting the Government to lay down their arms. He expressed support for Qatar as the base for a Taliban office, stating that he was doing so to avoid any pretext that might prolong war. He again reiterated the need for the Government to lead the peace process and announced that he had recently met with a delegation representing the Hezb-e Islami party led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and hoped such discussions would continue. On 15 February, President Karzai confirmed to the media that his Government had engaged in talks with the Taliban — a claim rejected in a statement attributable to the Taliban — and on 21 February, he endorsed the opening of a Taliban office in Qatar, affirming that the peace process was his Government's first priority.

6. On 17 February, the third trilateral summit among President Karzai, President Ahmadinejad and President Zardari was held in Islamabad. The resulting joint statement underlined the full support of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan for an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned inclusive peace process.

7. Progress continued on the implementation of the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme with the technical support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Reports indicate that provincial peace committees and local authorities increased outreach activities following the Traditional Loya Jirga in November 2011, which had reinvigorated such efforts. According to the joint secretariat of the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme as at mid-February, 3,825 ex-combatants had been formally enrolled in the Programme. Discussions were reported with representatives of armed groups, thought to represent an additional 825 combatants, who had expressed an interest in reconciling but had yet to participate in the process. The joint secretariat also reported informal undertakings to stop fighting by groups who were not prepared to register with the Programme. The reintegration of the first groups from Kabul and Zabul Provinces, as well as large groups from Badghis, Baghlan and Kandahar, is particularly noteworthy. Initial assessments indicate security improvements in some areas, with a high level of reintegration, although concerns persist about the eligibility of a number of the groups that have been accepted into the Programme.

8. On 19 December 2011, following their appointment by President Karzai, five members of the Independent Election Commission were sworn in. The terms of the incumbents, Momina Yari and Muhammad Gurziwani, were renewed and the following three new commissioners were appointed: Dastagir Azad, former

Governor of Nimroz Province; Hashem Folad, previously Member of Parliament for Nangarhar Province; and Rida Azimi, an ex-senator from Parwan Province. The terms of Chairman Fazal Manawi and Abdul Pashaye continue until early 2013. The President's sole discretionary power over appointments to the Commission has fuelled fears among some opposition groups regarding its impartiality in future elections. Also in December, the Commission and UNDP signed ELECT II (Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow, second phase), a two-year electoral assistance project focused primarily on continued capacity-building and the strengthening of the Commission.

9. In his speech opening the sixteenth session of the National Assembly on 21 January 2012, President Karzai outlined the Government's achievements in the past year, highlighting progress in the health and education sectors. The two Members of Parliament killed in the past year, Hashim Watanwal (Uruzgan Province) and Mutaleb Bek (Takhar Province) were remembered, along with 47 other senior Afghan officials and community leaders who were victims of violence in the same period. The President emphasized the need for Afghans to take charge of their own destiny under the unitary State system agreed to in the 2004 Constitution, stating that the country was not a political laboratory for outsiders. He appealed for constructive cooperation from Members of the Assembly and reassured them that the fundamental lines of Government policy and ministerial nominees would soon be presented for parliamentary assent. Other work in the lower and upper houses of the Assembly includes the adoption of the budget, introduced to the Meshrano Jirga (upper house) on 5 February, and a review of a backlog of laws pending with various parliamentary commissions.

10. On 22 December 2011, 10 political parties gathered in Kabul to launch the National Coalition of Afghanistan, under the leadership of opposition figure and former presidential candidate, Abdullah Abdullah. Key policy platforms include a parliamentary form of government and greater decentralization. The other major opposition bloc, the National Front of Afghanistan, led by Zia Masood, also backs such changes to the governance systems. This has been the subject of a contentious debate — often split along ethnic lines — that dates back to the 2004 Constitutional Loya Jirga, which set forth a centralized State structure. The recent vocal demands for greater subnational autonomy have sparked heated public exchanges.

B. Security developments

11. The United Nations continued to monitor security-related events relevant to the work, mobility and safety of civilian actors across the country, particularly those that affect the delivery of United Nations mandated activities and programmes. Security-related events declined in December 2011 (1,296) and January 2012 (1,286) compared to the previous two-month reporting period. The number of events was also lower than during the same period of the previous year, December 2010 (1,581) and January 2011 (1,636). This reflects multiple factors, including seasonal trends (the harsh winter likely significantly hampering insurgent movement), as well as the disruption of insurgent activity by Afghan and international military operations targeting insurgent networks throughout the summer and autumn, particularly in the south. Armed clashes and improvised explosive devices constituted the majority of such incidents, accounting for nearly 60 per cent of the total in the reporting period.

The focus of military activities remained the south-eastern provinces and Kunar and Nangarhar Provinces in the East.

12. Anti-Government elements carried out 9 suicide attacks in December 2011 and 12 in January 2012, 2 of which were complex attacks. An intimidation campaign continued with the targeted assassination of high-ranking Government officials, members of the security forces and influential local political and religious leaders. The focus of these attacks shifted back to the southern provinces, which recorded roughly 50 per cent of the total number of incidents countrywide. Not all the killings were directly linked to the insurgency; local power struggles also generated violence and added to a climate of fear and mistrust.

13. Major demonstrations following the unfortunate burning of Korans at Bagram Airbase in Parwan Province on 21 February recalled the protests of spring 2011, including one which led to the deaths of three international United Nations staff members, four international guards and five Afghan civilians in Mazar-i-Sharif. As at 23 February, at least nine civilians had died as a result of this latest incident.

14. Overall, the second tranche of the transition progressed as planned. Transition implementation plans for the 18 "tranche II" areas — setting out the process vis-à-vis security, strategic communications, governance and development issues — and the evolution of the Provincial Reconstruction Team were agreed between the Government and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Provincial transition packages are being developed by the Ministry of Finance to support the implementation of national priority programmes by geographic area.

15. UNAMA continued working with provincial development committees and ministries to strengthen the coordination of provincial development planning and promote coherence between the Government and ISAF. This included providing logistical support to the Government's Transition Coordination Commission to assess progress in transition areas as decisions on tranche III are made. United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in Afghanistan started to identify linkages and the potential for increasing alignment with Government priorities.

16. On 31 January 2012, the annual 2011 UNDP police perception survey was released by the Ministry of the Interior. It showed some positive trends in confidence in the police and the role of female officers. Despite a reported decrease in perceptions of police corruption over the past year, this issue, together with accountability, was highlighted as an outstanding challenge. Efforts to improve security through community-based policing initiatives resulted in the expansion of the Afghan Local Police to approximately 11,000 members in 57 validated sites. On 25 December 2011, at the National Security Council, the Minister of the Interior announced that another community security initiative, the Critical Infrastructure Protection Programme, would be halted while the future of the programme is determined.

17. Bilateral strategic agreements signed during the reporting period by President Karzai with members of the international community sealed long-term partnerships, including on economic and cultural aspects, in addition to security assistance.

C. Regional cooperation

18. Political dialogue and cooperation between Afghanistan and countries in the region gained momentum in the reporting period, building on the process launched at the Istanbul Conference for Afghanistan: Security and Cooperation in the Heart of Asia in November 2011. At a meeting in Kabul with relevant ambassadors, held on 5 February 2012, the Government circulated a concept paper to serve as a "road map" to the follow-up ministerial conference in Kabul, now tentatively scheduled for 11 June. The paper focuses on 12 confidence-building measures (from the original 43 presented in Istanbul) aimed at expanding regional cooperation in three broad areas, namely political and security; economic; and education, cultural and legal issues.

19. On 1 February, the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, Hina Rabbani Khar, met with President Karzai in Kabul, where they discussed enhancing bilateral cooperation on a range of issues including security, development and trade. In a joint communiqué, Pakistan reaffirmed its full support for Afghanistan and agreed that an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned reconciliation process was vital to achieving long-term peace.

20. On 21 December 2011, an Afghan delegation of 24 members of both houses of the National Assembly visited Islamabad and met with Prime Minister Yusuf Gilani of Pakistan, parliamentarians and civil society organizations, as part of the Pakistan-Afghanistan Parliamentarians' Dialogue. They recommended improving coordination on counter-terrorism and addressing the issue of terrorist safe havens. On 31 January 2012, a group of Afghan senators also met with the Prime Minister of Pakistan in Islamabad, as part of a series of cross-border exchange visits by parliamentarians of the two countries.

21. At the trilateral summit, the Presidents of Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan agreed not to allow threats to one another originating from their territories and to enhance cooperation on counter-narcotics and economic issues, including trade facilitation and joint infrastructure and energy products.

22. Bilateral relations between Afghanistan and neighbouring countries were characterized by steady progress in economic cooperation. On 16 January, President Karzai's office stated that the Government had granted a request by Pakistan for a power line to pass through Afghanistan to allow for the transmission of electricity from Uzbekistan to Pakistan. According to the Deputy Minister of Water and Energy of Afghanistan, Ghulam Faruq Qazizada, the route and conditions for the power line will be determined through negotiations between Pakistani and Afghan technical teams.

23. Also on 16 January, the eighth session of the Afghanistan-Pakistan Joint Economic Commission opened in Islamabad, co-chaired by the Minister of Finance of Afghanistan, Omar Zakhilwal and the Minister of Finance of Pakistan, Abdul Hafeez Shaikh. The Joint Commission agreed to set forth a time-bound road map to enhance bilateral cooperation, particularly with regard to ensuring the import of 1,000 megawatts of electrical power (the CASA-1000 project) and gas from the Central Asian republics to Pakistan via Afghanistan, as well as a road link between Pakistan and Tajikistan via Afghanistan.

24. Bilateral talks between Afghanistan and Turkmenistan on economic cooperation were held on 26 January in Turkmenistan during the visit of President Karzai to President Berdimuhamedov. Discussions centred on the measures required to finalize the full implementation of the trans-Afghanistan gas pipeline that passes through Afghanistan to Pakistan and India, as well as the Afghanistan-Turkmenistan railway and the export of electricity to Afghanistan.

25. There were also notable instances of foreign investment in Afghanistan from within the region. On 26 December 2011, at a meeting in Tehran between the Minister of Trade and Industry of Afghanistan, Anwar ul-Haq Ahady, and the Deputy Oil Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ali Reza Zeighami, the Islamic Republic of Iran agreed to supply Afghanistan with up to 1 million tons of petroleum products annually. Mr. Ahady also visited port facilities in the southern part of the Islamic Republic of Iran that could be used for transporting Afghan imports and exports. On 28 December, Afghanistan signed its first major oil exploration contract with a Chinese company to develop three fields in the northern provinces of Sari Pul and Faryab, estimated to hold at least 87 million barrels of oil and to bring $7 billion to Afghanistan over the next 25 years. On 16 January 2012, an agreement was reached for an Iranian company to produce 1 million tons of cement annually in Herat Province, valued at $150 million, and to develop Herat's Pahlawanan coal mine.

26. With the support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and UNDP, representatives of Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan met in Dubai from 29 to 31 January to discuss the quadripartite solutions strategy for Afghan refugees. Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran host 3 million refugees, while recent UNHCR studies show that up to 60 per cent of returnees are considered to be living in worse conditions and experiencing significant problems rebuilding their lives in Afghanistan. In line with the principles of the Istanbul Process on Regional Security and Cooperation for a Secure and Stable Afghanistan, the strategy aims to create conditions conducive to voluntary repatriation through community investments; promote livelihood opportunities; and provide assistance to host communities. The strategy was signed by all three Governments and is to be formally launched in Switzerland in May. The modalities of a multi-donor trust fund were also discussed at the Dubai meeting.

III. Human rights

27. On 4 February, UNAMA released its 2011 annual report on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, in which it reported an increase in civilian casualties for the fifth consecutive year. UNAMA documented 3,021 civilian deaths, an increase of 8 per cent compared to 2010, with anti-Government elements being responsible for 77 per cent of the deaths, an increase of 14 per cent compared to the same period in 2010. Pro-Government forces were responsible for 410 civilian deaths, a decrease of 4 per cent compared to the same period in 2010. In 9 per cent of cases, the civilian deaths could not be attributed to either party.

28. A statement issued on a Taliban-affiliated website criticized the 2011 annual report for being one-sided. It disputed whether provincial governors and police chiefs were "civilians" as stated in the report's discussion of targeted killings of civilian Government officials. The statement also listed several incidents in which

pro-Government forces had killed civilians that the Taliban believed UNAMA did not account for in the report. UNAMA has followed up on those claims and has been able to confirm that it did account for all the listed incidents. While recent Taliban statements have increasingly raised the importance of reducing civilian casualties, the statements have not resulted in any discernable reduction in civilian deaths and injuries caused by their tactics. Halting the use of victim-activated pressure-plate improvised explosive devices and suicide bombings, given their indiscriminate and disproportionate impact on Afghan civilians, would be a credible demonstration of such intent.

29. In the months of December 2011 and January 2012, UNAMA documented 383 civilian deaths and 820 civilian injuries, an increase of 39 per cent in civilian casualties (deaths and injuries) compared to the same two-month period in 2010-2011. While the number of civilian deaths decreased by 5 per cent, civilian injuries increased by 77 per cent. Anti-Government elements were responsible for 1,047 of the casualties (87 per cent) and pro-Government forces for 54 (4 per cent). Fifteen per cent of the total number of civilian casualties (53 killed and 123 injured) in December 2011 and January 2012 were children, an increase of 9 per cent compared to the previous year.

30. Suicide attacks by anti-Government elements were deadlier in December and January. Fifteen suicide attacks caused increased civilian casualties, mostly in the southern region. A total of 124 civilians were killed (32 per cent of all civilian deaths) and 442 injured (54 per cent of all civilian injuries), representing a large increase in deaths and injuries caused by suicide attacks, compared to the same two-month period in 2010-2011. Improvised explosive devices by anti-Government elements caused 111 civilians deaths in December and January, a 17 per cent decrease compared to the same period in 2010-2011.

31. Air strikes remained the leading cause of civilian deaths by pro-Government forces. A total of 12 civilians were killed, representing a 37 per cent decrease compared to the same two-month period the previous year. Civilian casualties from contentious night search operations decreased to 13 (9 killed and 4 injured), a 48 per cent reduction compared to the same period the previous year. There were 16 civilian casualties resulting from ground engagements (9 killed and 7 injured), a decrease of 70 per cent compared to the previous year.

32. Together with the other members of the country task force on monitoring and reporting, UNAMA continued to implement the monitoring and reporting mechanism on the situation of children in Afghanistan. In response to the action plan signed in February 2011, the Government of Afghanistan reported progress in preventing child recruitment and other grave violations, including the issuance of decrees, an awareness-raising campaign and capacity-building of Afghan security forces on child rights. Concrete steps were made in the western provinces of Herat and Ghor, with child protection units established in army and police recruitment sections.

33. In response to the October 2011 UNAMA report on the treatment of detainees in Afghan custody, the Government of Afghanistan and ISAF undertook steps to implement key recommendations. Having suspended transfers of detainees to 16 facilities identified by UNAMA as locations where systematic torture had occurred, ISAF implemented a plan of on-site inspections and remediation training of National Directorate of Security and Afghan National Police investigative personnel in all 16 detention facilities. Following the completion of the initial

on-site inspection and remediation training, on 15 February, ISAF announced that it had recertified eight detention facilities and conditionally certified four facilities pending further on-site inspection. Four others, including National Directorate of Security facilities in Kandahar and Kabul, are yet to be certified. ISAF has resumed the transfer of detainees from custody to the eight fully certified facilities, and plans to commence a monitoring programme for the detainees it transfers, from custody to trial, and to establish training and monitoring teams in all its regional commands. The National Directorate of Security established a human rights department to investigate allegations of abuse and torture and issued instructions reminding staff of their responsibility to adhere to national and international standards. Continuing its own follow-up, UNAMA visited 78 detention facilities managed by the National Directorate of Security, the Afghan National Police and the Central Prisons Directorate to reassess the treatment of conflict-related detainees since the release of the report.

34. A December 2011 Presidential Decree transferring the Central Prison Directorate from the Ministry of Justice to the Ministry of the Interior formally came into effect on 10 January. The Ministry of the Interior affirmed its commitment to the independence of the Directorate within the Ministry, ensuring the separation of policing and correctional work. UNAMA is monitoring the situation to ensure that this separation is understood and implemented, particularly at the subnational levels.

35. The mandates of all nine Commissioners at the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission expired on 16 December 2011. President Karzai reappointed six Commissioners and three positions remain vacant. Afghan civil society organizations expressed concern about the opaque nature of the process and the risk that inappropriate appointments could affect the Commission's effectiveness. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, and UNAMA welcomed the subsequent dialogue between the Government and civil society on the appointments process, emphasizing that qualified commissioners representing various segments of society, including women and minorities, should be appointed through an inclusive, transparent and genuinely consultative process to meet national and international standards.

36. UNAMA continued to work with the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission and civil society organizations to monitor and advocate for the protection of women's rights. From 18 to 20 December 2011, in connection with the issuance of its December 2011 report, entitled "A Long Way to Go: Implementation of the Law on the Elimination of Violence against Women", UNAMA hosted a national-level expert seminar on forced and underage marriages for law enforcement and Government officials. It also sponsored a number of capacity-building programmes in the south-eastern, central and central highlands regions to raise awareness of the law in local communities and create opportunities to discuss women's rights issues with religious leaders, law enforcement, Government officials and civil society groups.

IV. Implementation of the Kabul process and aid coherence

37. During the reporting period, the international community and the Government of Afghanistan worked on meeting commitments made at the Bonn Conference in December 2011 on mutual accountability and the sequencing of the national priority

programmes. Particular emphasis was placed on advancing national priority programmes and initiatives relating to governance and the rule of law.

38. In December, the Management Committee for Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund approved the first instalment of $100 million (total $350 million) for the implementation of the five-year capacity-building for results programme. The programme creates a mechanism for line ministries and line departments, in coordination with the Ministry of Finance and the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission, to develop capacity-building plans to improve budget implementation, business processes and service delivery of line ministries responsible for national priority programmes. Under the programme, 2,400 staff will be appointed and trained for key civil service positions.

39. On 22 January, at the 9th meeting of the High-Level Committee on Aid Effectiveness, led by the Minister of Finance, the Committee set forth a new framework for engagement between the Government and the international community based on the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, adopted at the Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, held in Busan, Republic of Korea, in December 2011. Afghanistan was selected as a priority country to implement the approach, given the planned shift in strategy from stabilization to long-term development cooperation. The emphasis is on long-term efforts and incremental approaches to fostering key peacebuilding and state-building goals, such as legitimate and inclusive politics, security and justice, economic foundations and revenue generation for accountable service delivery.

40. During the reporting period, there was a growing consensus within the Government and the international community that governance reforms that lead to economic growth and improved service delivery are crucial to the transition and the implementation of national priority programmes. To that end, planning commenced on a series of events aimed at delivering tangible outcomes ahead of the international conference on Afghanistan in Tokyo in July 2012. A series of targets and benchmarks will be developed at an inter-ministerial retreat on governance in mid-March; this will be followed by a meeting of the Joint Coordination Monitoring Board. Together, these should ensure commitment to a course of reforms to strengthen core Government functions and address the anticipated financing gap.

V. Governance and rule of law

41. During the reporting period, the Independent Directorate of Local Governance, the High Office of Oversight and the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission, with the support of UNAMA, held a series of formal consultations with the donor community to build consensus on support to the three governance-related national priority programmes: transparency and accountability, efficient and effective government, and local governance. Shared priorities were identified and will be submitted to the standing committee on governance for approval prior to the meeting of the Joint Coordination Monitoring Board. Similarly, efforts continued to finalize the national priority programme on law and justice for all, so that it can also be submitted to the Board at its next meeting. With UNAMA support, the Government of Afghanistan established a series of focus groups with Government institutions and donors to consider different aspects of the programme.

42. The joint Government and international Monitoring and Evaluation Committee continued its anti-corruption work. In February, at the second of a series of meetings, the International Community Transparency and Accountability Working Group discussed support for the prioritization and implementation of the 64 benchmarks to combat corruption. These include proposed improvements to the draft Anti-Corruption Law, the rationalization of personnel structures to reduce opportunities for corruption, and international organizations addressing their own internal accountability and transparency.

43. To support the implementation of the national priority programme on subnational governance policy and local governance. UNAMA worked with the Government to establish a new, quarterly Subnational Governance Coordination Forum. Members include representatives from the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission and the Ministries of Finance, Rural Rehabilitation and Development and the Economy. UNAMA continued efforts to promote accountable subnational governance with elected and non-elected institutions and civil society organizations. In Mazar-i-Sharif Province, a conference was held to promote civil society awareness of the subnational governance policy of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance and more effective interaction with the Provincial Council. Similarly, in the provinces of Farah, Badghis and Ghor, UNAMA, in cooperation with the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission, successfully implemented a four-day public administrative reform awareness training workshop attended by over 160 civil servants. Participants developed a working knowledge of the Civil Service Law, in accordance with the Commission's public administrative reform policies.

44. Over several weeks in January and February, the 34 Provincial Councils held their annual administrative board elections (chairman, deputy chairman, secretary). While not actively engaged in the process, UNAMA monitored polling where requested by local authorities. In general, elections were free of controversy, although there were disputes in some areas over the interpretation of a quorum, highlighting the need for clearly agreed regulations to be widely accepted and understood prior to voting. The Independent Directorate of Local Governance and the Independent Election Commission are working to resolve challenges.

45. The adoption of the Criminal Procedure Code has been identified as a priority since the 2010 Kabul Conference. The draft Code and Law on the Structure and Jurisdiction of the Office of the Attorney General, Anti-Corruption Law and Major Crimes Task Force Law were considered at a workshop led by the Ministry of Justice, from 18 to 21 December. Participants representing the Office of the Attorney General, the Ministry of the Interior and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance focused on revising the draft laws. Subsequently, the Ministry of Justice submitted the draft Criminal Procedure Code to the Council of Ministers for review.

VI. Development and humanitarian assistance

46. In response to the Government's requests for the United Nations system in Afghanistan to act more cohesively, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General has led efforts to ensure greater system coherence. Although at times humanitarian and development actors need to retain a distinct identity from the

Mission for programme delivery purposes, the work of all United Nations agencies, funds and programmes should be mutually reinforcing. Options were developed with the support of a United Nations Development Group "United Nations Coherence Mission" and UNDP. At the annual retreat of the United Nations country team on 24 and 25 January, four areas were endorsed for immediate efforts towards better integration, namely integrated annual workplans; an integrated budgetary framework; communications and advocacy; and business operations. There will be further discussion on integrated programming and budgetary frameworks. Internal efforts to ensure greater coherence in the coming year will include the midterm review of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and the development of a common country assessment. Priorities for 2012 include alignment with the national priority programmes and other Government frameworks, on-budget support and capacity development.

47. During the reporting period, UNDP undertook a strategic review of its engagement in Afghanistan, which recommended several steps to increase the role of UNDP, as part of the integrated mission, to assist the Government of Afghanistan during and beyond the transition period, including the establishment of a policy unit providing policy advisory services to the Government and the United Nations system in Afghanistan. Further, in line with the commitments made at the London and Kabul Conferences in respect of on-budget support, in December 2011, UNDP signed a letter of intent with the Government of Afghanistan to route an ever-increasing portion of UNDP assistance through on-budget support. It is anticipated that some 80 per cent of UNDP support will be channelled in this manner.

48. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) country programme midterm review was concluded on 24 January. Much of the process was Government-led and there were extensive consultations with communities, donors and officials at the central, provincial and district levels. The programme will be streamlined with some recalibration in the five key areas of justice, routine immunization and polio eradication, nutrition, increased enrolment of girls in education and emergency obstetric care. In terms of delivery, emphasis will be placed on community-based planning, programming and ownership, addressing social norms and social change, communications and improved monitoring and evaluation. Meanwhile, a United Nations working group on maternal and newborn health, including the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund and the World Food Programme, has been liaising with relevant line ministries in Afghanistan to mainstream concerns on this issue across outstanding national priority programmes and, where possible, the action plans for those already endorsed. From 20 to 23 January, a visiting team of experts from the International Labour Organization (ILO) provided technical assistance in finalizing the national priority programme on the facilitation of sustainable decent work through skills development and market-friendly labour regulation. ILO will continue to advise on exploring linkages between this and other key national priority programmes, particularly those focused on agriculture and rural infrastructure.

49. Institutional capacity development and the humanitarian development continuum are major priorities for the United Nations, to help ensure a successful transition. In December 2011, the Ministry of Energy and Water signed a $27.7 million agreement with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to provide technical assistance for the implementation of the Irrigation Restoration and Development Project. The total budget for the six-year project is

$148.7 million, $97.8 million of which is being provided by a World Bank grant aimed at strengthening national capacity to address the underlying causes of drought. The project builds upon activities and capacities already established under the Emergency Irrigation Rehabilitation Project. Planned outcomes include increased agricultural productivity to benefit an estimated 230,000 households, the construction of two to three small dams and irrigation systems in northern Afghanistan, and the development of the Ministry's hydrometeorological networks and systems.

50. The humanitarian community continued to focus on responding to needs arising from conflicts and natural disasters and on providing initial assistance for internally displaced persons and refugee returnees. Other priorities include focused advocacy for equitable and sustainable development to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

51. An estimated 19,300 persons were displaced in December 2011 and January 2012 owing to conflict across the country, further aggravating Afghanistan's deepening displacement crisis and bringing the total number of internally displaced persons in 2011 to almost 500,000, a 45 per cent increase in internally displaced persons owing to conflict compared to 2010.

52. Acute vulnerability, with limited shelter options, access to basic services and income generation, coupled with the unusually harsh winter conditions, contributed to the tragic and widely publicized death of children living in informal settlements in Kabul in January and February. More than 30,000 people currently live in 45 informal settlements in and around the capital. Between November 2011 and January 2012, most settlements received non-food items and/or fuel. Work is ongoing to address remaining gaps. The acute vulnerability in the informal settlements provides a snapshot of the harsh realities facing displaced Afghans throughout the country, many of whom are beyond the reach of the humanitarian community. Durable solutions to Afghanistan's displacement crisis require immediate and effective coordinated action by the Government and development actors to ensure that rural development, urban planning and housing, and property rights are adequately addressed.

VII. Counter-narcotics

53. Enhanced regional cooperation was the principal focus during the reporting period, with the December 2011 launch of the Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. The ceremony in Vienna was attended by ministers, deputy ministers and high-level representatives of the Governments of Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The Regional Programme is a strategic framework for the work of the Office and multilateral partners, focusing on counter-narcotics and the rule of law in order to respond effectively to drug trafficking and organized crime. It will include the training of counter-narcotics law enforcement officials, joint raids, drug seizures and border patrols, as well as activities to tackle cross-border illicit money flows.

54. Within the framework of the Regional Programme, trilateral talks among the drug enforcement agencies of Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan were held in Dushanbe on 20 January. The talks were aimed at ensuring joint efforts against

organized criminal groups, timely information exchange and training for professional specialists. A joint protocol which included a provision on biannual meetings of the heads of the anti-drug services of the three countries was signed. In addition, the first regional workshop on the strategy on preventing and combating cross-border cash smuggling was held in Dushanbe from 25 to 27 January. It was attended by the heads of financial investigation units from eight countries, namely Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

55. Representatives of the existing subregional information-sharing mechanisms, the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre and the joint planning cell of the Triangular Initiative met in Almaty, Kazakhstan, between 6 and 8 February. Under the auspices of the above-mentioned Regional Programme, counter-narcotics law enforcement specialists from Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan and international observers identified concrete actions to enhance interdiction efforts in 2012, with an emphasis on precursor control.

56. On 16 February, the Secretary-General attended the Third Ministerial Conference of the Paris Pact, in Vienna, which was held as part of comprehensive and concerted international action to stem the flow of opium and heroin from Afghanistan. Ministers stressed the need to reduce cultivation and production, as well as drug trafficking and abuse, and to establish a broad international coalition to combat opiate trafficking. Affirming their common and shared responsibility, the Paris Pact partners adopted the Vienna Declaration, a statement of international commitment to act in a balanced and comprehensive manner against the menace of illicit Afghan opiates, which requires a global response and action addressing both the demand and supply sides.

VIII. Mission support

57. In section IX of its resolution 66/247, the General Assembly approved the budgets for special political missions for 2012, including $241 million (compared to $270.7 million in 2011) for UNAMA. No new significant capital investment projects are envisaged for 2012.

58. UNAMA continued efforts to improve its capacity and the efficiency of its operations. The overall vacancy rate at the end of December 2011 was 19 per cent for international staff and 9 per cent for national staff. The training centre continues to partner with local and regional institutions to strengthen capacity, and 1,138 national staff and 304 international staff benefited from educational opportunities in 2011 to enhance their skills to deliver on mandate activities. Coordination continues with the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) at the joint UNAMA-UNAMI support office in Kuwait.

59. The decision of the Government of Afghanistan to replace all private security companies with the Afghan Public Protection Force by March 2012 has met legal and operational difficulties. The United Nations and diplomatic missions have been informed that they may continue with the current arrangements for compound security. Clarifications are being sought on the future arrangements for project security. UNAMA has also taken note of the Government's decision demanding the removal of security barriers on roads and pavements in Kabul. Implementation of

either decision will inevitably compromise the level of mandatory minimum operating security standards.

IX. Observations

60. Ambitious transition timelines for 2014 are informing all processes and politics now at play in Afghanistan. I fully support the position of the Government of Afghanistan that progress on governance, development and the rule of law are vital to a sustainable security transition. All are fundamentally linked — trust in State institutions and increased prosperity are essential to build and reinforce stability — and acting on a comprehensive approach can create conditions for a peace process that guarantees the rights and responds to the aspirations of all Afghans. Currently, however, different trajectories vis-à-vis these processes have been observed.

61. The 2011 Bonn Conference provided assurances of an enduring partnership between Afghanistan and its international partners through 2014 and the decade beyond. Recently signed bilateral strategic partnership agreements are an important start in this direction. Making clearly defined, tangible commitments is now vital to inform planning and to reinforce public confidence. Unpredictability brings the risk of destabilization and distrust, as evidenced by the reactions to recent comments in the media, which were interpreted to indicate an acceleration of the agreed timeline for international troop withdrawals.

62. The future shape of, and support for, Afghan security institutions will be discussed at the upcoming NATO Chicago summit meeting on Afghanistan in May 2012. Mutually agreed force requirements will have to be matched by resource commitments. While there are reports of improved security in areas where the Afghan Local Police is operating, human rights abuses against civilians have also been documented. I share the view of the Government of Afghanistan that such security initiatives should have clear lines of accountability, command and control linking them to formal national security forces and institutions, namely the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police.

63. Fiscal constraints are to be anticipated, particularly given the international economic climate. The need to address likely financing gaps has spurred a renewed engagement by the Government on reforms to strengthen its core functions and ensure a more sustainable development path. Kabul process commitments and national priority programmes remain guiding policies for international engagement, emphasizing mutual accountability, on-budget support and greater coherence in an increasingly Afghan-led governance and development agenda. The lead-up to the Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan in July 2012, indicates a focus on prioritizing the 22 national priority programmes and advancing their phased implementation, as well as ensuring greater mainstreaming of counter-narcotics. Given increasing fears about fiscal sustainability and potential funding gaps, the Government has, rightly, increasingly emphasized economic growth as a core priority. Within such discussions, the United Nations advocates that the Government and donors ensure continued investment in basic social services and human development, elements critical to social equity and enhanced stability. Further, the evolution of provincial reconstruction teams requires protection against assistance gaps and clarity on the handover of functions to the Government of Afghanistan and its institutions.

64. Afghanistan remains a country with significant development deficits and shortfalls exacerbated by protracted conflict and recurrent natural hazards, including drought, extreme winter conditions, earthquakes and flooding. Breaking the cycle of reliance on humanitarian assistance requires a focus on preventing further suffering while also finding durable solutions for the successful integration of returnees and addressing the plight of the displaced. This entails ensuring the effective delivery of and access to basic and effective coordinated assistance by the Government and development actors and ensuring that issues of rural development, urban planning and housing, as well as property rights, are also adequately addressed.

65. To adequately address the humanitarian situation, my Special Representative, through the Deputy Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator and the humanitarian country team, will continue to work with Afghan authorities and humanitarian actors to improve access to people in need and to address their needs, and to advocate that all parties respect the principles of humanitarian action in the delivery of assistance.

66. The dynamic Afghan lead which has been demonstrated by efforts to reach agreement on regional confidence-building measures in line with the principles of the Istanbul Process is welcomed. The follow-up ministerial conference to be held in Kabul in June 2012 is the focus of continuing efforts to ensure greater coherence within existing regional mechanisms. Enhanced regional security and cooperation can contribute greatly to the broader environment for stabilization efforts.

67. The cordial atmosphere at the opening of the sixteenth session of the National Assembly is to be noted; President Karzai's public commitment to present, in the near future, the fundamental Government policy lines and his submission, on 25 February, of nine ministerial nominees for the Cabinet is a welcome recognition of the Constitutional authorities of different State institutions. Improved executive-legislative relations can help to ensure that this session of the National Assembly is a substantive one, working through a packed legislative agenda and driving real change in the lives of the Afghan people.

68. The emerging national debate on possible modalities and potential outcomes of an Afghan-led peace process has been largely constructive, but there has been concern across the political spectrum about the opacity of efforts in this area and the lack of inclusiveness in the process. There has been official disquiet over what was seen as a lack of consultation on plans to open a Taliban office in a third country; and civil society organizations worry that a peace deal could compromise the achievements of the past 10 years. Continuing discussions on the future functions and leadership of the High Peace Council could offer a way forward, ensuring even greater inclusiveness in the exit process.

69. The United Nations and many of Afghanistan's international partners continue to stress support for a broad-based and inclusive peace process that respects the achievements of the past decades and leads to sustainable peace and enhanced national unity. Human rights, including women's and children's rights, and international obligations must not be viewed as impediments but rather as critical elements of the process. At this point, progress towards peace can be reinforced by effective action to reduce civilian casualties and abuses on all sides.

70. In its resolution 1974 (2011) the Security Council requested me to conduct a comprehensive review of the mandated activities of UNAMA and United Nations

support in Afghanistan with the aim of informing the Council's consideration of the UNAMA mandate in March 2012. A review was also requested in a letter from the Foreign Minister of Afghanistan, Zalmay Rassoul, to which I responded expressing the firm belief that such a course of action offered the Organization an opportunity to further streamline and harmonize the activities of the United Nations family in Afghanistan and clarify the UNAMA mandate and its orientation to current realities, 10 years after the creation of the Mission.

71. With full recognition of Afghan sovereignty and the progress made in the past 10 years, good offices and political outreach in support of Afghan-led processes should become the essence of the UNAMA political mandate at the national and subnational levels. This should continue to encompass initiatives towards regional consensus-building and reconciliation efforts, and could extend to other Afghan-led political processes, supporting their inclusiveness, and the inclusiveness of Afghan institutions. Afghan and international interlocutors have also emphasized the need to continue promoting the capacity of Afghan electoral institutions and the integrity of future electoral processes. As with all Afghan-led processes, UNAMA stands ready, at the request of the Government of Afghanistan, to work on strengthening the capacity of local institutions to effectively fulfil their authority as mandated under the Constitution.

72. Already an important focus of the work of UNAMA and the United Nations, the protection, promotion and fulfilment of the human rights of all Afghans should become increasingly central to the Mission's mandate in the next year and beyond, including in the light of the current issues relating to the protection of civilians, the concerns regarding local security arrangements, the likelihood of progress on social and economic rights in the medium and long term, and the protection and fulfilment of the interests and aspirations of Afghan men, women and children in the context of a peace process.

73. Promoting a coherent international civilian engagement behind the Government's development agenda and programmes remains a priority for the Mission. A concretization, in Chicago and Tokyo, of the mutual commitments defined by the Government of Afghanistan and its international partners in Bonn in 2011 will be necessary to guarantee the success and sustainability of the transition and Kabul processes. UNAMA should continue, including through its role as co-chair of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, to support the Government's efforts towards this end.

74. On the basis of these considerations, which emerged during the extensive consultations — first and foremost with Afghan Government representatives and Council members — held in the context of the review, I recommend that the mandate of UNAMA, which expires on 23 March 2012, be renewed for an additional 12 months. UNAMA continues to play an important role in international support for Afghanistan. The imperatives of the transition process, the developments that have taken place over the past year, and Afghanistan's political and development agenda for 2012 should guide the Mission and its operational activities as outlined above.

75. Other elements of the mandate as set out in Security Council resolution 1974 (2011) and previous resolutions should continue to guide the work of UNAMA. In this respect, and recalling that UNAMA is an integrated mission, the respective mandates and technical competencies of relevant members of the United Nations

family should be leveraged and, wherever pertinent, with an emphasis on coherently enabling and strengthening the role of Afghan institutions to perform their mandated duties to the Afghan people.

76. The practical implementation of the mandate should be accomplished through a continued presence at the subnational level, the size and configuration of which should be determined by my Special Representative on the basis of an assessment of mandated activities and needs on the ground, the capacity and competency to carry out activities and respond to these needs, as well as the requirements for security and support.

77. Finally, I welcome the arrival of my new Special Representative, Ján Kubiš, in Kabul on 17 January. On his second day in Afghanistan, Mr. Kubiš was warmly received by President Karzai. Mr. Kubiš is laying the foundations for a strong partnership with his Afghan and international counterparts. I would also like to reiterate my thanks to all the United Nations national and international staff for their continued dedication, under difficult conditions, to fulfilling our commitments to the people of Afghanistan.

Annex

Progress against benchmarks

I. Security

Benchmark: sustainable Afghan security institutions and processes capable of ensuring peace and stability and protecting the people of Afghanistan

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Increase in the number of national police and national army personnel mentored, trained and operational according to an agreed structure	• The army and the police are on track to reach respective 2012 growth figures of 195,000 and 152,000. • The UNDP police perception survey noted a 46 per cent improvement from 2010, compared to a 34 per cent improvement from 2009 in public confidence in the police forces.
Development of and progress in a plan for a phased and conditions-based transition to Afghan security lead	• The first and second tranches of the transition areas were approved by President Karzai on 22 March and 27 November 2011, and the transition implementation plans were launched.

II. Peace, reintegration and reconciliation

Benchmark: national dialogue and regional engagement to pursue constructive and inclusive process to foster a political environment conducive to peace

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Development and implementation of inclusive national and regional processes to enhance peace, reintegration and reconciliation efforts	• The November 2011 Traditional Loya Jirga agreed on continuing to pursue dialogue. • As at the end of January 2012, 3,354 anti-Government elements were enrolled in the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme. An additional 442 were being processed. • As at the end of January 2012, $157.5 million had been deposited in the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund. Ongoing implementation of the Programme includes: (a) establishment of coordination cells in four line ministries; (b) commencement of the implementation of two demining projects, covering Baghlan, Kunduz and Herat Provinces, and a vocational training programme in Badghis; (c) establishment of the Small Grants Programme, with 27 projects approved; (d) implementation of 160 projects through the National Solidarity Programme.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Increased ability by Afghan authorities to gather and provide substantiated, updated and accurate information to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011)	• In 2011, the Government of Afghanistan provided information to the Committee, contributing to the removal of 15 names from the list of sanctioned Taliban individuals.
Increased public support for the peace process through engagement at the community level and with civil society	• Two additional provincial peace committees were established, bringing the overall number to 30. Twenty-nine provincial joint secretariat teams were established to implement the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme. • Reintegration events, including a high-level conference on the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme in southern Afghanistan, were undertaken at the national and provincial levels. The High Peace Council and the joint secretariat of the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme were involved. • Official High Peace Council visits were conducted throughout Afghanistan and to Germany, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Norway, Pakistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and the United Arab Emirates. • The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) provided technical support to the High Peace Council on the adoption of the gender policy for the peace and reconciliation process in Afghanistan and on the development of a workplan for 2012.

III. Governance and institution-building

Benchmark: extension of Government authority throughout the country through the establishment of democratic, legitimate, accountable institutions, down to the local level, with the capacity to implement policies and to be increasingly capable of sustaining themselves

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Increased ability by Afghan authorities and independent electoral institutions to manage and conduct genuine and periodic elections, with due regard to women's participation and constitutionally guaranteed quotas	• The Independent Election Commission undertook a lessons learned exercise, drafted a strategic plan and a capacity development and training plan, and commenced work on clarifying and strengthening internal regulations. • The ELECT II project was launched in December 2011. In collaboration with the Independent Election

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	Commission, the project will focus on, inter alia, building the capacity of electoral institutions in the intra-electoral period, to include technical and infrastructure capacity; considering options for the future of the voter registry; and conducting outreach to broaden participation.
Establishment of a Monitoring and Evaluation Committee and development of anti-corruption benchmarks	• The Monitoring and Evaluation Committee was established; international and national representatives were selected; and over 60 benchmarks to address corruption at the national level are being prioritized and promoted.
Empowerment of anti-corruption institutions to oversee a whole-of-Government approach to anti-corruption	• The High Office of Oversight coordinated the development and implementation of the Government's action plan to fight corruption. Fifty-four ministries and independent directorates prepared their anti-corruption action plans in 2011, of which 48 were approved by the High Office of Oversight.
	• The National Assembly examined the Audit Law, which ensures the independence of the Control and Audit Office.
Annual publication of asset declarations of public officials	• Approximately 2,500 senior officials from 38 Government institutions (an increase of 505 individuals) registered their assets. The findings were published by national media.
Increased capacity of civil servants at the central, provincial and district levels to discharge functions and deliver ervices	• The Afghan Civil Service Institute delivered functional training for 2,900 civil servants and enrolled 200 college graduates in Kabul and 400 graduates subnationally in an internship programme.
Increased transparency and effectiveness of civil service appointments	• The Independent Directorate for Local Governance developed terms of reference for provincial and district governors.
	• In accordance with the public administrative reform process, 17 Deputy Governors and 243 District Governor vacancies were announced, and 16 Deputy Governors and 86 District Governors were officially recruited.
Strengthened civil service reform supported by a comprehensive approach to capacity-building and donor-funded technical assistance	• The World Bank, the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission and the Ministry of Finance agreed to the five-year capacity-building for results mechanism for the capacity development of middle and senior management civil servants.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	• Preparations for establishing the Civil Service Transitional Trust Fund to develop a sustainable civil service and complement other donor-funded programmes commenced.
Implementation of the subnational governance policy and development of subnational regulatory, financing and budgetary frameworks	• The provincial budgeting policy for line departments to undertake provincial budgeting was developed by the Independent Directorate for Local Governance and the Ministry of Finance and piloted in 5 pilot ministries, via line departments in all 34 provinces.
	• The Law on Local Administration was finalized by the Independent Directorate for Local Governance and submitted to the Ministry of Justice.
	• The Law on the Right to Information drafted by the Independent Directorate for Local Governance was presented to the Ministry of Culture and Information.
	• The basic functions of provincial councils were included in the new draft of the Provincial Council Law.
	• Twenty-two provincial development plans were completed, 31 revenue improvement action plans were formulated and implemented, which, ideally, will enhance planning and budgeting at the local level.
Development and publication of criteria for administrative boundaries	• The Independent Directorate for Local Governance and the Department of Geodesy and Cartography of the Government of Afghanistan requested district authorities to submit information relating to district boundaries. In 2011, four provinces submitted their complete related data.
Establishment of adequate infrastructure for functioning Government institutions, especially at the subnational level	• Reconstruction of administrative buildings in 29 provinces.
	• Construction of provincial council offices in 5 provinces.
	• Construction of district council offices in 46 districts.
	• Construction or rehabilitation of primary courts in 10 districts, across 5 provinces.
Establishment of credible and accessible judicial and penal systems that respect and uphold the human rights of all citizens	• The draft criminal procedure code was reviewed by the Council of Ministers.
	• The three-year national priority programme on law and justice for all underwent extensive consultation for submission to the Joint Coordination Monitoring Board in 2012.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	• The Ministry of Justice increased the number of legal aid offices from 19 in 2010 to 26 in 2011. The number of legal aid lawyers in the Ministry of Justice totalled 97 by November 2011. An additional 35 lawyers were provided to the Ministry's Legal Aid Unit through the justice sector reform programme of the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund.
	• The provision of legal aid services by non-governmental organizations increased; in 2010, there were approximately 190 legal aid lawyers and current estimates total approximately 250.
	• The number of lawyers registered with the Afghanistan Independent Bar Association increased from approximately 928 at the end of 2010 to approximately 1,150 in December 2011.
	• The Council of Ministers approved a pay and grading reform package for the Office of the Attorney General in December 2011.
	• On 10 January, the Ministry of Justice formally handed over the Central Prison Directorate to the Ministry of the Interior, pursuant to a Presidential Decree of 17 December 2011. With United Nations partners and other stakeholders, UNAMA is advocating for the Directorate to remain a structure with its own reporting lines to the Minister of the Interior, independent from the Afghan National Police and other departments. The Minister of the Interior reaffirmed his commitment in this regard.

IV. Human rights

Benchmark: improved respect for human rights of Afghans, in line with the Afghan Constitution and international law, with particular emphasis on the protection of civilians, the situation of women and girls, freedom of expression and accountability based on the rule of law

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Reduction in the number of incidents of unlawful use of force and intimidation of civilians, through compliance by relevant actors with international law	• In 2011, 3,021 civilians were killed in conflict-related incidents, an increase of 8 per cent compared to 2010. Anti-Government elements were responsible for 2,332 deaths, an increase of 14 per cent compared to 2010. Pro-Government forces were responsible for 14 per cent of civilian deaths, a 4 per cent decrease compared to 2010.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	• ISAF issued two public tactical directives to mitigate civilian casualties, including on night search operations, and two additional internal tactical directives on convoy protection and entry into medical facilities, contributing to better protection of civilians and a reduction in civilian casualties by ISAF.
	• The Taliban issued a number of public statements committing to ensure civilian protection during its operations.
	• UNAMA continued its monitoring and advocacy efforts to raise awareness of international human rights law and international humanitarian law.
Improved awareness by Afghans of their rights and by the Government of its obligations	• UNAMA published five reports on the protection of civilians, implementation of the Law on the Elimination of Violence against Women, treatment of detainees in the custody of the Government, and facilitation of the Afghan People's Dialogue on Peace and related advocacy activities with various stakeholders and media to raise awareness of human rights concerns among the general public.
	• The Government/United Nations action plan for the prevention of underage recruitment, sexual violence and the killing and maiming of children was signed on 30 January 2011, and the inter-ministerial technical working group on children and armed conflict was established.
	• Three decrees to prevent underage recruitment and enhance related disciplinary measures within the Afghan national security forces were issued by the Ministries of the Interior and Defence.
	• Two decrees to raise awareness of the prohibition of child recruitment, torture and attacks on schools and hospitals in Islam were issued by the Ulema Shura (Council of Clerics).
Improved impact of, and support for, legal and policy measures to combat violence against women and girls	• A by-law regulating the operation of women's protection centres was approved. UN-Women is providing technical support to the Ministry of Women's Affairs, provincial offices and civil society organizations in operationalization of the regulations; it also conducted training for directors of women's affairs from 24 provinces.
	• The Law on the Elimination of Violence against Women has been underused by prosecutors. Cases of violence against women are often mediated by local traditional

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	dispute resolution mechanisms in violation of the law. (See UNAMA's 2011 report on the Law on the Elimination of Violence against Women.)
	• The UN-Women country office continued to administer the Special Fund for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. Seven of the 17 women's protection centres in Afghanistan are funded from the Special Fund. Total funds disbursed for shelters in 2011 amounted to $742,246.
Improved awareness of, and support for, legal and policy measures related to combating impunity and furthering transitional justice	• The Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission finalized its conflict-mapping report on human rights violations in Afghanistan from 1978 to 2001.
	• The action plan for peace, reconciliation and justice has not been revised, despite being a Kabul Conference commitment.
	• Civil society organizations and the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, with support from UNAMA, conducted the Afghan's People's Dialogue on Peace, soliciting views from more than 1,500 local Afghans on peace, security, transition, the rule of law and impunity.
	• The majority of provincial peace councils are reported not to include fair representation of civil society, women and victims' groups.
	• The joint secretariat of the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme adopted the standard operating procedures on vetting, but local peace committees are reported to promise amnesties to combatants if they join the Programme.
Government fulfilment of reporting requirements on international human rights covenants and conventions and implementation of the recommendations from the Human Rights Council universal periodic review of Afghanistan	• The Committee on the Rights of the Child considered the initial report of Afghanistan on its implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
	• UN-Women supported the Government in preparing and submitting its initial periodic report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women for consideration in 2012.
	• With technical support from UNAMA, the Human Rights Support Unit of the Ministry of Justice developed an action plan to implement the 2009 recommendations of the Human Rights Council universal periodic review of Afghanistan.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Increased capacity and commitment of the Government of Afghanistan and the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, as the Afghan national human rights institution, to respect, protect, fulfil and promote human rights	• The Human Rights Support Unit at the Ministry of Justice became fully functional. It reviewed Afghan legislation for its compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It also conducted gender assessments of all Government ministries. • The Joint Coordination Monitoring Board endorsed the national priority programmes on human rights and civic responsibilities. Its three-year implementation plan was developed. • Although the Government pledged to provide $1 million to the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, the final 2011/2012 budget submitted to the Parliament allocated only half the pledged amount and failed to regularize the Commission's legal status within the overall budget framework. • The Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission conducted a self-assessment of its organizational and operational capacity to enhance future capacity development. • The National Directorate of Security established a Human Rights Unit to investigate allegations of detainee abuse and torture.

V. Economic and social development

Benchmark: Government policies supported by the international community that promote sustainable economic growth and contribute to overall stability

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
National priority programmes are designed and implemented with international support and endorsement	• A total of 11 of the 22 national priority programmes, have been endorsed by the Joint Coordination Monitoring Board. • The Government's 100-day reporting system was tested throughout the year, informing donors about progress made with respect to the national priority programmes action plans. • The Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund received funding from donors after the approval of the International Monetary Fund programme, which includes on-budget support to the national priority programmes.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	• UN-Women is supporting the Ministry of Rehabilitation and Rural Development in developing a national strategy on women's economic security and rights; it also organized a workshop for senior Ministry staff on gender and economic empowerment.
More equitable distribution of development assistance and Government expenditure throughout Afghanistan	• A provincial budgeting pilot was launched in 2010 to incorporate needs assessed at the provincial level into the national budget. Each province may receive up to $2.5 million in the upcoming 2012/2013 budget.
	• The Ministry of Finance undertook an independent review of the public finance management capacity in 14 ministries to examine options for improved budget implementation.
Increased revenue collection and sustainable growth based on Afghan resources	• Domestic revenue collection exceeded its 2011/2012 target by 11.8 per cent in the past 12 months. Tax revenues exceeded the previous year but fell behind the target. Custom duties exceeded those collected in 2010/2011, both actual and target. Non-tax revenues were higher than at the same time in 2010/2011 and higher than target, essentially due to the first receipts from the Aynak copper mine. Preliminary data suggest that growth in 2012 will be lower than in the previous year (8.4 per cent, but still strong).
	• The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative multi-stakeholder group met eight times in 2011, and an independent audit company was selected by the Government of Afghanistan to validate the regular compliance reports.
	• Civil society groups are members of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative multi-stakeholder group, and the draft Access to Information Law includes provisions on public access to mining data.

VI. Regional cooperation

Benchmark: sustained and effective regional coordination in support of prosperity, peace and stability

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Improved coordination of regional bodies and increased regional investments	• The regional cooperation working group established by the International Contact Group met on 3 June 2011, reaffirming commitment to Afghanistan's stability and economic prosperity.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	• The Istanbul Conference for Afghanistan: Security and Cooperation in the Heart of Asia was held on 2 November 2011, following which the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan circulated a concept paper with 12 confidence-building measures (43 measures were presented at the Istanbul Conference) to deepen regional cooperation.
	• On 12 June 2011, the Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement was made operational.
	• Tripartite meetings among Afghanistan, Pakistan and the United States of America resumed on 3 May 2011, but were suspended again following the murder of Burhanuddin Rabbani.
	• Afghanistan and India signed a partnership agreement covering political and security cooperation; trade and economic cooperation; capacity development and education; and social, cultural and civil society relations.
	• The Russian Federation committed $500 million for the Central Asia-South Asia Electricity Trade and Transmission Project at the 10th meeting of the Council of the Heads of Government of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.
	• At its meeting in January 2012, the Afghanistan-Pakistan Joint Economic Commission agreed to set forth a time-bound road map of steps to enhance cooperation on energy transfer and road links among Central Asia, Afghanistan and Pakistan.
	• At a summit in Tehran in June 2011, the Presidents of Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan signed a declaration on strengthening joint counter-narcotic and counter-terrorism efforts and on expanding political, security, economic and cultural cooperation.
	• In January 2012, Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran signed a memorandum of understanding to increase cooperation in the customs, banking and insurance sectors, and anti-smuggling measures.
	• In September 2011, Afghanistan and Kazakhstan signed an agreement on expanding trade between the two countries.
	• The Afghanistan-Tajikistan "energy bridge" — an electric transmission line connecting the Sangtuda hydroelectric power plant in Tajikistan to Baghlan, Afghanistan — was inaugurated in October.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	• Trilateral talks among Afghanistan Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan were held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, in January 2012 to organize counter-narcotics efforts, exchanging timely information and training professional specialists.

VII. Partnership between the Government of Afghanistan and the international community

Benchmark: coherent support by the international community for Afghan priorities within an Afghan-led coordination framework

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Increased percentage of aid aligned with the Afghanistan National Development Strategy and Government priorities	• The Government announced the adoption of the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, endorsed at the Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, as its new framework for aid management. • The Government aid management policy is under revision, to improve alignment with the outcomes of the Bonn and Busan Conferences and with the current development context and aid environment. • The Development Cooperation Dialogue, an annual engagement between the Ministry of Finance and donors to discuss a financing envelope and agree on alignment with key priorities, is to begin in March 2012. Alignment with national priority programmes will be assessed.
Improved accountability of procurement and contracting on behalf of the Government and the international community	• Recommendations from the Working Group on Contracting of the Office of the National Security Council were submitted to the Office of the President.
Strengthening of the Joint Coordination Monitoring Board in support of the Kabul process and as a means of regular review of progress on Afghan priorities and mutual commitments	• The Joint Coordination Monitoring Board was reconfirmed as the key high-level coordination mechanism in Afghanistan after initiatives such as endorsement of the national priority programmes were agreed upon.

VIII. Counter-narcotics

Benchmark: sustained trend in the reduction of poppy cultivation, narcotics production and drug addiction

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Decrease in poppy cultivation, narcotics production and addiction rates	• Poppy cultivation in Afghanistan reached 131,000 hectares, 7 per cent higher than in 2010. Seventy-eight per cent of cultivation was concentrated in Daikundi, Helmand, Kandahar, Uruzgan and Zabul Provinces in the south, and 17 per cent in Badghis, Farah and Nimroz Provinces in the west. • The number of poppy-free provinces decreased from 20 in 2010 to 17 in 2011, as Baghlan, Faryab and Kapisa Provinces lost their poppy-free status. • Potential production in 2011 is expected to reach 5,800 tons, up 61 per cent from 3,600 tons produced in 2010. • Drug treatment provision increased marginally and more treatment options are available, including community-based outpatient and aftercare. • The Government's new drug demand reduction policy and HIV/AIDS prevention and care policy were completed to address increasing addiction rates and associated harm in the country.
Increase in effective interdiction and counter-trafficking efforts	• In 2011, counter-narcotics police officers conducted 1,807 operations, resulting in seizures of 52,839 kg of opium, 32,793 kg of heroin, 57,968 kg of hashish, 29,374 kg of morphine and 112,237 kg of precursor chemicals. A total of 963 suspects, including 7 foreign nationals, were arrested. • Under Operation TARCET III (Targeted Anti-Trafficking Regional Communication, Expertise and Training Initiative), Afghan authorities made the largest precursor seizures of all the countries in the region participating in the operation. This included 23,000 kg of acetic anhydride (three cases) which, in an important breakthrough, were seized at an international border crossing into Afghanistan, enabling the launching of backtracking investigations. The Islamic Republic of Iran and Tajikistan also reported seizures of acetic anhydride (1,330 kg and 404 kg respectively). An additional 19,000 kg of other chemicals were also seized during the operation.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Increased in licit agriculture and related private capital investment in areas previously used for poppy cultivation	• The monitoring mechanism on counter-narcotics within the Joint Coordination Monitoring Board is being refined to measure the increase in licit agriculture and related private capital investment within the framework on national priority programmes.